

VZCZCXYZ0015  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHNJ #0143/01 1171453  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH (CCY AD5AB584 MSI1024-695)  
O 271453Z APR 09  
FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6877  
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY 0014  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 0158  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NDJAMENA 000143

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D COPY PARA MARKING PARA 15

FOR SE GRATION FROM AMBASSADOR NIGRO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/20/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [MASS](#) [MARR](#) [LY](#) [SU](#) [CD](#)

SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR SE GRATION'S MAY 1-3 VISIT TO CHAD

REF: NDJAMENA 111

Classified By: AMBASSADOR LOUIS J. NIGRO, JR. FOR REASONS 1.4(b) and 1.4 (d)

-----  
Your Visit to Chad  
-----

[¶1.](#) (C) Embassy N'Djamena welcomes your visit to Chad. This message is aimed at providing you with background for use in meeting with Chadian President Idriss Deby Itno, and for other requested meetings. It focuses primarily on Chad's role in the Darfur crisis, in regional humanitarian assistance efforts, in regional efforts to restore security and stability, and also on our own bilateral relationship with Chad. It offers for your consideration recommendations for engagement with Deby, both of a general nature and specifically regarding the JEM. See para 15 below.

-----  
Chad as Victim  
-----

[¶2.](#) (C) Sacrifices: President Deby believes that Chad has been the victim of the Darfur crisis: it was the outbreak of violence in Darfur that sent 300,000 refugees into Chad; that caused the displacement of 200,000 Chadians from their homes; that has puts enormous stress -- political, economic, environmental and social -- on Chad's poor eastern zones; that has exacerbated inter-ethnic violence; and that made the once-friendly Khartoum regime a mortal enemy. Deby believes that Chad has been asked to make sacrifices far beyond its responsibility for regional instability, and far beyond its meager means.

[¶3.](#) (C) Arabs and Africans: Deby believes, or professes to believe, that his regime has been targeted by Arab countries led by Sudan, who want to overthrow him and seek to "islaamicize" and "arabize" Chad. (Some 20 percent of Chadians describe their ethnicity as "Arab.") He believes that during the 1980s, Chad was Sub-Saharan Africa's shield against Libyan expansionism. He argues that Chad is presently playing the same role against Sudanese adventurism.

-----  
Deby's Purchase on Power  
-----

[¶4.](#) (C) Family Affairs: In the year since rebel attacks on the capital, the Deby regime's position has improved militarily (vis-a-vis Chadrebels), politically (vis-a-vis

the internal opposition), and diplomatically (vis-a-vis Sudan). Deby's personal position within the concentric circles of his own Zaghawa ethnic group, Bideyat clan, and Itno family may be weaker than previously.

¶15. (C) The Chad/Sudan Proxy War: The GOC right now has great confidence that it can defeat any rebel attack from Sudan. The GOC's approach to Sudan has been conducted according to peace accords signed with Khartoum -- in Tripoli in 2006, in Riyadh in 2007, and in Dakar in 2008 -- aimed at ending the Chad-Sudan proxy war, normalizing bilateral relations and restoring peace along the frontier.

¶16. (C) Diplomatic Deby: Deby and his advisers believe they have made serious and honest efforts to resolve all their problems peacefully and diplomatically. The GOC holds that its agreement with the democratic political parties of the opposition in August 2007 -- the August 13 Accord -- provides the domestic complement to its accords with its own rebels (Sirte) and with Sudan (Tripoli, etc.), because it consented to political reform and an electoral process aimed at credible national elections in 2010 and 2011.

¶17. (C) Deby and Democracy: Deby came to power in a military takeover in 1990 and has ruled in an authoritarian manner since then. He has won presidential elections three times, but none were free and fair. He amended his own Constitution in 2005 to eliminate presidential term limits. The opposition boycotted the subsequent 2006 election. Deby agreed to the August 13, 2007 Accord following pressure from the French, EU and USG.

-----  
Deby and the JEM  
-----

¶18. (C) Deby considers his relationship with JEM to be an alliance of necessity, not of choice, and believes that the JEM would exist without GOC support. Deby's relationship with the JEM seems to have gone through three stages. First, beginning in 2003, Chad helped Sudan's military against the budding Darfur rebellion, including against the JEM, which it considered bandits and insurgents. Later, as the JEM developed into a more effective fighting force and reinforced its image as defender of the Zaghawa people, Chad supplied some assistance and gave refuge to JEM fighters in Chad, with the relationship assuming the nature of "a family affair" between ethnic brothers. In February 2008, the JEM rallied to the regime's defense, although its main forces may have arrived too late to the capital to have played a major role in Deby's survival. GOC-JEM collaboration since then has been much closer and has become more "political" than "ethnic" in nature. One relatively positive outcome in Darfur from Deby's perspective would be JEM's being granted effective power in Darfur, thus preventing Chad rebels from basing there: a JEM-ruled Darfur would be a buffer against the existential threat of Chad rebels taking refuge in Sudan.

-----  
Chad and Chad Rebels  
-----

¶19. (C) The GOC considers the Chad rebels to be clients rather than allies of Khartoum. The GOC believes that the Chadian rebellion would wither absent decisive Sudanese support, training, and financing. Deby's approach to the Chad rebels has been conducted under the terms of the October 2007 Sirte Accord signed with then-principal Chad rebel leaders. (The document provided mechanisms for disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of rebels into Chadian life, including the political arena.)

-----  
The U.S. and Chad  
-----

¶10. (C) U.S. Strategic Interests in Chad include:

-- Darfur, Darfur, Darfur: The overriding USG interest in Chad is Darfur: we seek to deliver effective humanitarian assistance to Darfuri refugees in Chad and Chadians displaced by instability emanating from Darfur. We seek further to enlist Chadian collaboration for any resolution of the Darfur crisis itself. Some 85-90 percent of total U.S. assistance here goes to relieve the humanitarian and security situations created by the impact of the Darfur crisis.

-- Preventing State Failure?: Chad is not Somalia, or not yet. But it is an ethnic and socio-cultural powder-keg under fragile central control. There are more than 100 ethnic groups. Ethnicity is the chief determinant of political culture. Chad's history is proof of its extreme instability and continued lack of ability to provide minimum levels of protection and governance to its people.

-- Protecting Petroleum Investments: The U.S. investment in Chad's oil sector is the single biggest American private enterprise investment in Sub-Saharan Africa. The operations of an ExxonMobil-led consortium, 80 percent U.S.-owned, makes Chad the fifth-largest exporter to the U.S. in sub-Saharan Africa. ExxonMobil's investment has been responsible for USD two billion to US shareholders, and has drawn in enormous quantities of U.S.-sourced materials and labor since 2000.

¶11. (C) Historic USG Engagement with Chad: In the 1980s, Chad was important as an "ally proxy" versus Libya. The Chadians soundly defeated the Libyans in the 1985-1987 "Toyota Wars." During the 1990s, U.S. interest in Chad diminished after Chad and Libya found common ground based on Chad's territorial integrity. Only in the early part of this decade did U.S. interest in Chad increase with the growing crisis in Darfur, rising tension in Chad-Sudan relations, and our petroleum investment in southern Chad.

¶12. (C) USG Assistance: Our assistance to Chad had not matched the importance of the country as part of the Darfur solution. U.S. engagement in Chad is oriented almost exclusively toward Darfur refugees and other victims of the Darfur crisis, not toward Chad's own needs. Security assistance, especially counter-terrorism cooperation under TSCTP, has been dramatically reduced since last year, in part because Leahy vetting procedures have added complications that have been difficult to resolve. Development assistance

is very limited, totaling less than USD 15 million in FY09.

¶13. (C) USG Leverage: The U.S. ranks behind France, the EU, Libya, and UN/MINURCAT in providing assistance to Chad. This limits our ability to exert influence. The Department is presently considering levying sanctions against Chad for inability to address trafficking in persons; although Chad does indeed need to make progress on this front, sanctions will only limit our leverage further. France has both an extensive military assistance and a well-funded development assistance program. The EU spends USD 80 million on democracy and development assistance. Libya provides critical active diplomatic support, plus military financial and technical assistance, much of it opaque to us. Support from the UN system is extensive, and the PKO MINURCAT trains Chadian police and gendarmes, as well as funding judicial and penal reform programs. Although the USG contributes heavily to MINURCAT, the GOC sees MINURCAT as an independent entity. China is also a player here, the extent of whose involvement is not known.

-----  
What Deby wants from the USG  
-----

¶14. (C) The most important item on Deby's U.S. wish list has long been an invitation to visit Washington, to include a private meeting with President Obama. Deby also seeks increased USG support with respect to Chad's efforts toward Sudan. Deby would appreciate USG facilitation of Chad's purchase of C-130 aircraft, preferably C-130Js. He would like to us restart and expand our security assistance

cooperation, especially counter-terrorism assistance under the Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Partnership. Deby would like more senior-level USG attention to Chad, including high-level official visits to Chad. Finally, Deby's government seeks more robust USG help with the World Bank and the IMF, especially encouraging the Bank to fully normalize its relationship with Chad. Of course, Chad would welcome any additional development assistance the USG might decide to provide as well.

-----  
The SE and Deby  
-----

15. (C) Recommendations for Approaching Deby:

-- Introductory: The SE might want to consider recalling his own visit here, which included a meeting with President Deby as part of then-Senator Obama's entourage in 2006. The SE should stress U.S. recognition of the sacrifices that Chad has made as a result of Darfur, as well as Chad's contributions to attempts to resolve Darfur issues. The SE should consider asking Deby for his analysis of the roots of the Darfur crisis and his recommendations for making progress toward resolution.

-- Regarding JEM: Deby will likely agree that the JEM should be integrated into political dialogue on Darfur. If the SE expresses expectation that JEM (as part of a coalition or independently) should take part in elections so that it can play a prominent role in a post-election government, Deby may well agree, albeit with some caveats (this is a matter for the Sudanese to decide, etc.) If the SE expresses expectation that the leadership of such a "political JEM" should be civilianized, Deby could agree in principle, or alternatively, he might decline to verbalize. Getting Deby's buy-in for bringing JEM to the table might be facilitated by a fuller explanation of our long-term goals.

NIGRO